the composite secular character of the society. Vigorous efforts are being made to contain militancy, recommence developmental activities, creat employment opportunities for the youth of the State and to activise the local administration for making it more responsive and accountable so that normalcy is restored fast and conditions conducive for the early return of the migrants to the State are created.

From time to time, discussions have been held with the representatives of the migrants about their problems and the current situation in the State, including the efforts that are currently under way to restore normalcy as early as possible.

Misuse of Free Passes for Freedom Fighters

*133. SHRI DRONAMRAJU SATYANARAYANA
SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item appeared in the Indian Express dated 20th May, 1993 stating that "Free Passes for Freedom Fighters freeway to fraud";

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government thereon;

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by Government to see that the loopholes in the schemes of free travel by freedom fighters are plugged immediately; and

(d) what is the total number of people found travelling by misuse of the passes for 'business trips', how many of them have been apprehended during this year?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIF): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Railways are making concerted and continuous efforts to prevent misuse or fraudulent use of passes issued by them.

(c) There are no loopholes in the scheme finalised in consultation with the Ministry of Home Affairs. However, if any specific aspect relating to the scheme warranting modification is brought to notice, necessary action will be taken in consultation with the Ministry of Home Affairs.

(d) Nil.

Development of Roads by Rubberised Bitumen

*134. SHRI TINDIVANAM G. VENKATRAMAN
SHRI V. GOPALSAMY : Will

the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total length of National Highways, Expressways in the country;

(b) what is the length out of it, which has been laid with rubberised bitumen in the country;

(c) whether there are rubberised bitumen roads in the capital other than the National Highway/Express Highway, if so, its length;

(d) whether Government propose to popularise rubberised bitumen roads in the country; if so, details thereof; and

(e) whether Government also propose to lay rubberised bitumen roads in all National Highways/Express Highways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) Total length of National Highways in the country is 34058 Km. One National Expressway 93 Km. long is also under construction.

(b) No stretch of the National Highway/Expressway has been laid with rubberised bitumen so far.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) The use of rubberised bitumen roads in the country is under study but is still in the experimental stage and its propagation will depend upon the outcome of these studies.

Kidnappings/Abductions in Terrorism Related Cases

*135. SHRI JAGMOHAN: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of persons kidnapped/abducted in the terrorism/insurgency-related incidents during the period from January 1, 1993 to July 15, 1993;

(b) what is the number of persons released and under what circumstances out of those kidnapped/abducted;

(c) whether it is a fact that Government agreed to release ten jailed militants, including Babar Badr, former Chief of Muslim Janbaz Force, now AL-Jehad, for securing the release of two IB officials abducted in June, 1993;

(d) if so, what are the details of the 'deal' and particulars of the militants/terrorists released; and

(e) whether any 'deal' on the same lines is being considered for the kidnapped Bihar Legislator, Shri P. K. Sinha?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S. B. CHAVAN): (a) and (b) As per information readily available with the Central Government, 359 persons were kidnapped/ abducted during the period of which 171 are reported to have been released.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

*136. *[Transferred to 6th August, 1993.]*

Amendment to the Law relating to Rape

*137. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA : Will

the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Commission for Women has suggested major changes in various penal laws to increase the punishment for rape and to widen the scope of legal definition of sexual assault which at present is very limited;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have accepted the suggestions of the Commission and propose to amend the law relating to rape in near future; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S. B. CHAVAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Proposal to Set up Southern Gas Grid

138. SHRI S. MUTHU MANI
SHRI PASUMPON THA. KIRUTTINAN : Will

the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up Southern Gas Grid for supply of gas to Southern States from Bombay High;

(b) whether any proposal to this effect has been received from the Chief Ministers of Southern States;

(c) if so, what action has been initiated by Government to implement the above project;

(d) what is the likely cost of this project; and

(e) what are the States likely to be covered by the said project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH SHARMA): (a) to (e) Requests received from the Southren States for a Gas Grid have been examined by Government. The concept of laying a gas pipeline from the Western Offshore to the Southern region has been approved in principle. The proposal envisages the use of surplus gas from the Western Offshore. This is also proposed to be supplemented by imported LNG and possibly pipeline imports of natural gas from the Middle East. The proposed grid will benefit the Southren States.

PAKISTAN'S ATTEMPT TO INVOLVE ISLAMIC COUNTRIES IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF INDIA

*139. SHRI SURESH KALMADI
SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL : Will

the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Pakistan has been attempting to involve other Islamic countries in the internal affairs of India by raking up the Kashmir issue;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the communique issued after the special Ministerial meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Conference in Islamabad of June 12 and 13th, 1993 had made references to Kashmir; and

(c) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?